

News Release



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For Immediate Release

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Overdose Awareness Day

Join Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) in recognizing International Overdose Awareness Day on Monday, August 31st. This day provides an opportunity to remember those who have died from overdose and raise awareness about overdose prevention and resources that can help save lives.

“The theme for 2026 is ‘25 years on. Still needed.’,” shares Melissa Propp, Clinic Manager at SWNPHD. “This theme reminds us that overdose continues to impact individuals, families, and communities and everywhere, but overdose deaths are preventable.”

Many types of drugs or substances can cause a fatal or nonfatal overdose. However, overdose deaths involving opioids have increased in recent decades. In 2021, 253 people in Nebraska died from a drug overdose, and at least 50% of those deaths involved an opioid.

Narcan Prevents Opioid Overdose

NARCAN® Nasal Spray (naloxone) is a medication that can temporarily reverse the effects of an opioid overdose. It works by blocking the effects of opioids and helping restore normal breathing. Naloxone can be administered by anyone and does not require medical training to use.

Nebraska residents can obtain Narcan at no cost through participating pharmacies without a prescription. Information about participating pharmacies and how to obtain Narcan is available through Nebraska DHHS’s Stop Overdose Nebraska resources.

Free Narcan Administration Training

SWNPHD offers free Narcan administration training to community groups, partners, and residents. The training teaches participants how to recognize the signs of an opioid overdose, respond appropriately, and administer Narcan.

“We all can play a role in preventing overdose deaths,” continues Propp. “We encourage residents, families, organizations, and community partners to learn how to use Narcan and consider carrying it. You never know when it could save a life.”

To learn more about overdose prevention visit Stop Overdose Nebraska at stopodne.com or contact SWNPHD at 308-345-4223 for more information about Narcan training. Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins, and Red Willow counties. You can follow SWNPHD on Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram or view the website at www.swhealth.ne.gov which contains many resources and additional information helpful to prevent disease, promote and protect health.

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